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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### MEMORANDUM

Planning,  
Zoning,  
Building Safety,  
Construction Inspection Services,  
Public Health,  
Housing Inspections,  
Code Enforcement

**To:** Mayor and City Council Members

**Cc:** Gregg Mandsager, City Administrator  
Dave Gobin, Community Development Director

**From:** Andrew Fangman, City Planner

**Date:** July 6, 2017

**Re:** Resolution Authorizing an Application with The Iowa Department of Economic Development For Community Attraction & Tourism Program For Funding The Pearls of Progress Project

#### BACKGROUND:

The State of Iowa working through the Enhance Iowa Board, has funded the Community Attraction & Tourism Program (CAT) to assist communities in the development and creation of multiple purpose attraction and tourism facilities. "Attraction" means a permanently located recreational, cultural, educational or entertainment activity that is available to the general public. Community attraction projects may include, but are not limited to, the following: museums, theme parks, cultural and recreational centers, recreational trails, heritage attractions, sports arenas and other attractions. A tourism facility draws people into the community from at least 50 miles (one way) from home.

In 2002, a joint application by the City of Muscatine and Muscatine County successfully obtained a CAT grant that was used to partially fund the Pearl of the Mississippi Community Improvement Project. Components of this \$9,625,422 project include: construction of the Muscatine Aquatic Center, construction of the Environmental Learning Center, an extension of the trail network from the riverfront to Weed Park, construction of the skate park at Musser Park, improvements to the Weed Park Rose Garden, renovations to the Weed Park tennis courts, installation of a new playground and Weed Park, enhancements to the Weed Park Lagoon, the Riverview Center, and installation of period lighting downtown. The CAT program ultimately contributed \$1,000,000 to this project.

July 14th is the deadline for submission of applications for the next round of CAT grants. There is a significant chance that this will be the final opportunity for communities to apply for CAT grants, as the Iowa Legislature has not authorized funding for additional rounds of CAT grants. The Community Improvement Action Team (CIAT) determined that Muscatine should not let this opportunity to fund needed improvements to the quality of life pass by without an application being submitted.

*"I remember Muscatine for its sunsets. I have never seen any  
on either side of the ocean that equaled them" — Mark Twain*

The CIAT further decided that this application should take the same approach of bundling a variety of community improvement projects into a single larger project that was successful in the original Pearl of the Mississippi Community Improvement Project. The CIAT and a sub-committee, focused on obtaining a CAT Grant, comprised of Gary Carlson, Rich Dwyer, Greg Jenkins and Gregg Mandsager, and Andrew Fangman reviewed all community improvement projects that are currently under development and selected the four projects that were of the greatest value to community, for which a grassroots interest can be clearly documented, and which best fit the criteria that Enhance Iowa Board has for the CAT program. These four projects were then combined into the Pearl of Progress Project.

The Pearl of Progress Project, will be joint project of Muscatine County and the City of Muscatine, will enhance Muscatine making it a more attractive place to visit, work, play, and live. Muscatine has a longstanding tradition of projects to enhance recreational, cultural, educational, and entertainment opportunities accomplished through a partnership amongst community stakeholders in the private, public, and philanthropic sectors. This project will build on significant prior investments made in community enhancement projects. The forthcoming major investments will help assure the economic vitality of the community and improve recreational and cultural amenities. The four components of the Pearl of Progress Project are: the conversion of the former HNI headquarters building into the new Musser Public Library & HNI Community Center, construction of the Westside Trail, construction of a dog park, and construction of cabins at the Muscatine County Conservation Board's Deep Lakes Park.

## **Musser Public Library & HNI Community Center**

The current home of Musser Public Library, which is 25,000 square feet in size, opened its doors in August of 1972. In 2015 a Master Plan Study, including a Space Needs Assessment, to determine how the library could best serve the community over the next twenty years was conducted. The study, provided 3 options; refurbishing the current facility, and two new, building options. The estimated costs for these options ranged from approximately \$10 million to \$16 million. The Library Board both felt that these costs were far too expensive and that we would not be able to proceed further based on those amounts. Then, unexpectedly, HNI Corp. contacted the City of Muscatine with a possible solution. HNI had already begun the process of relocating their corporate headquarters from their current location of 408 E. 2nd St., to a soon-to-be renovated HNI property directly adjacent. HNI offered to donate to the City their current headquarters to be used as a community center and library, creating the opportunity for the library to acquire a new facility for a fraction of the cost of building new.

The property was officially given to the City in December of 2016, and is appraised at approximately \$5 million dollars. This donation provides the City of Muscatine with a new location for Musser Public Library and make available ample meeting room space in the form of the HNI Community Center. In addition to the building and grounds donation, HNI has donated all community center/library-applicable existing furniture currently in the building including office furniture, soft seating, file and storage cabinets, several

conference tables and chairs, custom made casual furniture, whiteboards, and projection screens.

The new building is 34,000 square feet in size, over 25% larger than our current location. There are 109 parking spaces, the current library relies on a small number of metered on-space parking space for its parking needs. The building is LEED Silver certified, and is fully ADA compliant. If in the future, a need for expansion arises, the space is available to do so. The structure was completely renovated in 2005 and yet maintains its historical character, a critical component that lends itself to the mission of community stewardship that the library strives to provide. There will be over a dozen meeting and conference rooms ranging in size from 2-person study carrels to a 105-person capacity program room. While new libraries are moving towards increased meeting room and program space, the average amount of square footage devoted to these spaces is still only 3% of overall public space. In the new facility over 9% of available space will be devoted to this use placing the HNI Community Center & Musser Public Library far ahead of the curve in national library trends.

The new facility will serve as an anchor for the East end of Downtown Muscatine and provide space for existing community programs and activities such as the Farmer's Market and the Arts Council's outdoor Sunday concert, along with in-house programming created by the Library. This new dual-function facility will be owned by the City of Muscatine and will be fully operated and managed by the City's Library Department. This construction and remodeling project will bring the new building make suitable for community center and library operations.

## **Muscatine Community Dog Park**

The Muscatine Community Dog Park will be the Muscatine area's first off-leash dog park. The location secured for this project is on 14-acre City owned parcel that was previously leased out for agricultural purposes directly north of the City compost site, and directly west across Houser Street from Kent-Stein park. Four separated fenced areas are at the heart of the proposed design. Together these three fenced areas total 5 acres. They are each designed to serve the needs of a specific group of users. There will be a 0.5 acre senior dog area, a 1.5 acre small dog area, and 3 acre large dog area

Additionally, the site plan includes a training field attached to the large dog area. This area is primarily to be used for training and other structured events, and will also have a secondary function of serving as a backup to the other three areas, allowing them to be closed for turf maintenance and recovery as needed. The training field would be built a later date as part of a second phase. Amenities such as shade shelters, benches, water fountains, etc. will be provided within each of the three areas.

The parking lot, drinking fountains, picnic shelter, and informational kiosks that will be constructed as part of the Muscatine Community Dog Park, will also function a major trailhead on the City of Muscatine Trail network. The dog park is within 100 yards of the junction of the Westside Trail, Kent-Stein Park to Deep Lakes Park Trail, and the Riverfront Trail, and is directly to this junction by a one mile loop trail that runs on the west

side of Houser Street around City owned property that includes the Dog Park, a native prairie planting, the compost site, the Muscatine Transfer Station, and the Muscatine Slough. The ability for parking lot, drinking fountains, etc to also serve a trailhead provides a substantial savings over the cost of separately developing such facilities for each of the three projects, and provides a much better return on the dollars invested in these facilities

## **Westside Trail**

The Westside Trail will be an approximately 1.75-mile trail, 10' wide off road, multi-use trail, that will extend from Kent-Stein Park to Discovery Park. Construction of this trail will accomplish a number goals that will enhance the quality of life in Muscatine. It will create a single continuous trail network that links up all the Muscatine areas major recreational amenities. A major obstacle to pedestrians and bicyclists safely traveling in the west side of Muscatine will be removed though the construction of the Westside Trail. Currently there are two disconnected trail networks in Muscatine. There is a 3.5 mile network located in northwest Muscatine, which comprised of trails maintained by the City of Muscatine, the Muscatine County Conservation Board, and the Muscatine Community Y. There is a 4.5 mile trail the stretches from Deep Lakes Park along the Mississippi River through downtown and to its eastern terminus at Solomon Road just east of the Muscatine city limits. The Westside Trail will link these two trail networks into a single communitywide trail network.

The planning process for the Westside Trail began the identification in the City of Muscatine Comprehensive Plan, that was adopted in 2013, of a trail connection between Kent-Stein Park and Discovery Park a significant community need. In 2015 the Westside Trail was selected to receive \$432,000 of federal funding in FY 2019. This federal funding will come from Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The TAP program is a set-aside from Surface Transportation Program funds, a federal-aid transportation program, which provides funding used by States and localities for transportation improvement projects.

Both the Westside Trail and the Kent-Stein Park to Deep Lake Park Trail, a more than four-mile trail currently under construction, will begin at the western terminus of the existing Riverfront Trail within Kent-Stein Park. The Westside trail will then proceed north along Houser Street, through future site of Phase III of the Muscatine Soccer Complex. After crossing Hershey Avenue, the Westside trail will the proceed up the bluffs to the Muscatine Agricultural Learning Center. Currently there is no safe pedestrian or bike access to the Ag Learning Center. After crossing Lucas Street, the trail travels a short distance into Discovery Park. The Westside Trail will terminate in Discover Park with a connection to an existing trail. The City is in process of selecting an engineering firm to perform a route study. This study will determine the best route for the Westside Trail, with a particular focus on finding the best route through the bluff area.

## **Deep Lakes Park Cabins**

In April 2013 Muscatine County's newest park, Deep Lakes Park, was opened to the public for the first time. This park, located approximately one mile south of Muscatine, was made possible by a gift of land from the W.G. Block Company to the Muscatine County Conservation Board. The 435 acres of Deep Lakes Park contain approximately 120 acres of open water spread across more than 20 individual and interconnected lakes. The balance of Deep Lakes Park is comprised of sand dunes, grassy and brushy areas, and established cedar and cottonwood trees.

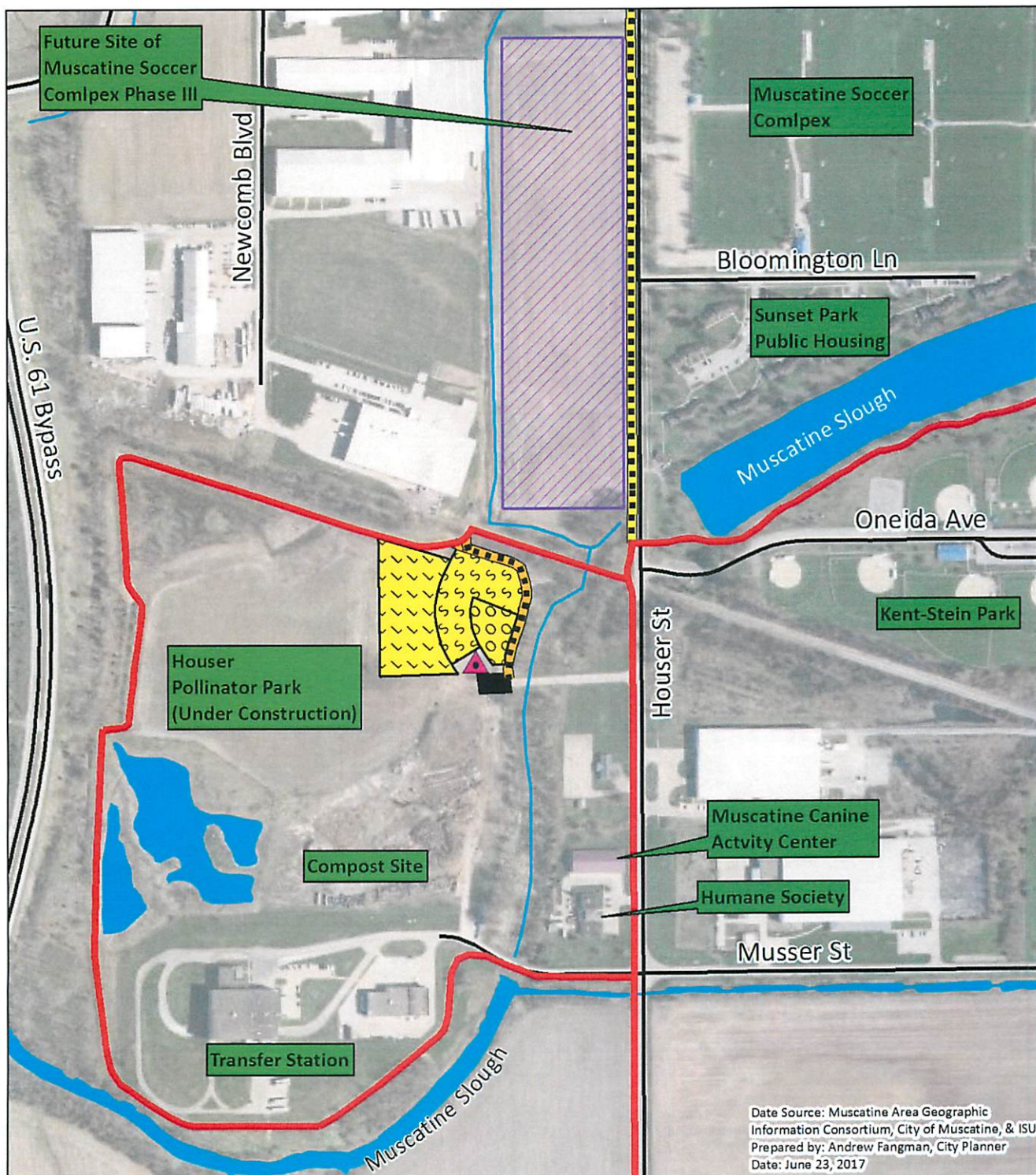
Since taking ownership of the land in December 2012 the Muscatine County Conservation Board has installed five gravel parking lots, two concrete boat ramps, joined together two of the lakes, made improvements to fish habitat, constructed a beach with a swim area, installed a sand volleyball pit, and constructed a handicapped accessible fishing pier. This plan, which was based on input received from the public, was completed and adopted by the Conservation Board in 2014. The Kent-Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail, a City of Muscatine project, which will be completed in October of 2017 will connect Deep Lakes Park to the City of Muscatine trail network with a paved, off road trail of more than four miles in length.

The Conservation Board also commissioned Shoemaker-Haaland to develop a master plan for the full development of Deep Lakes Park. The Deep Lakes Park Master Plan identifies over \$4 million worth of desired improvements that will transform the park into a major draw for visitors from Muscatine and beyond. The County Conservation Board has identified construction of four modern cabins, capable of sleeping 6 to 8 people, that would be available for rent year-round, as the next part of Master Plan for implementation, and has secured \$500,000 of County funds for the project. The proposed rental cabin would also be a first of its kind in Muscatine County. Such cabins have proven popular in surrounding County and State parks.

In order to submit a complete CAT grant application for the Pearls of Progress Project t, a resolution of support from the City Council is needed. The attached resolution meets the criteria of the CAT grant application. It is important to note that this resolution is just the beginning of City Council's involvement in the Pearls of Progress Project and CAT Grant process. Specific allocation of funds and approval of component project will occur at a latter and appropriate time as individual components of this project come forward.

Whether or not the CAT Grant application is successful the CIAT will continue to look for additional funding opportunities for the Pearls of Progress Project. The total project costs for all four components of the Pearls of Progress Project is approximately \$8.5 million, with all little over \$7.05 million already secured. The CAT grant is for one \$1 million, A successful CAT grant, and the City committing the remaining \$300,000 of 2018 or 2020 bonding capacity, leaves a gap of approximately \$200,000 that will still need to be raised from the community if Enhance Board grants the full \$1 million requested, however it should be noted that in recent years the awards for grant requests of over \$500,000 has average about 75% of the requested amount. If this the case with this application the total gap remaining would be closer to \$500,000

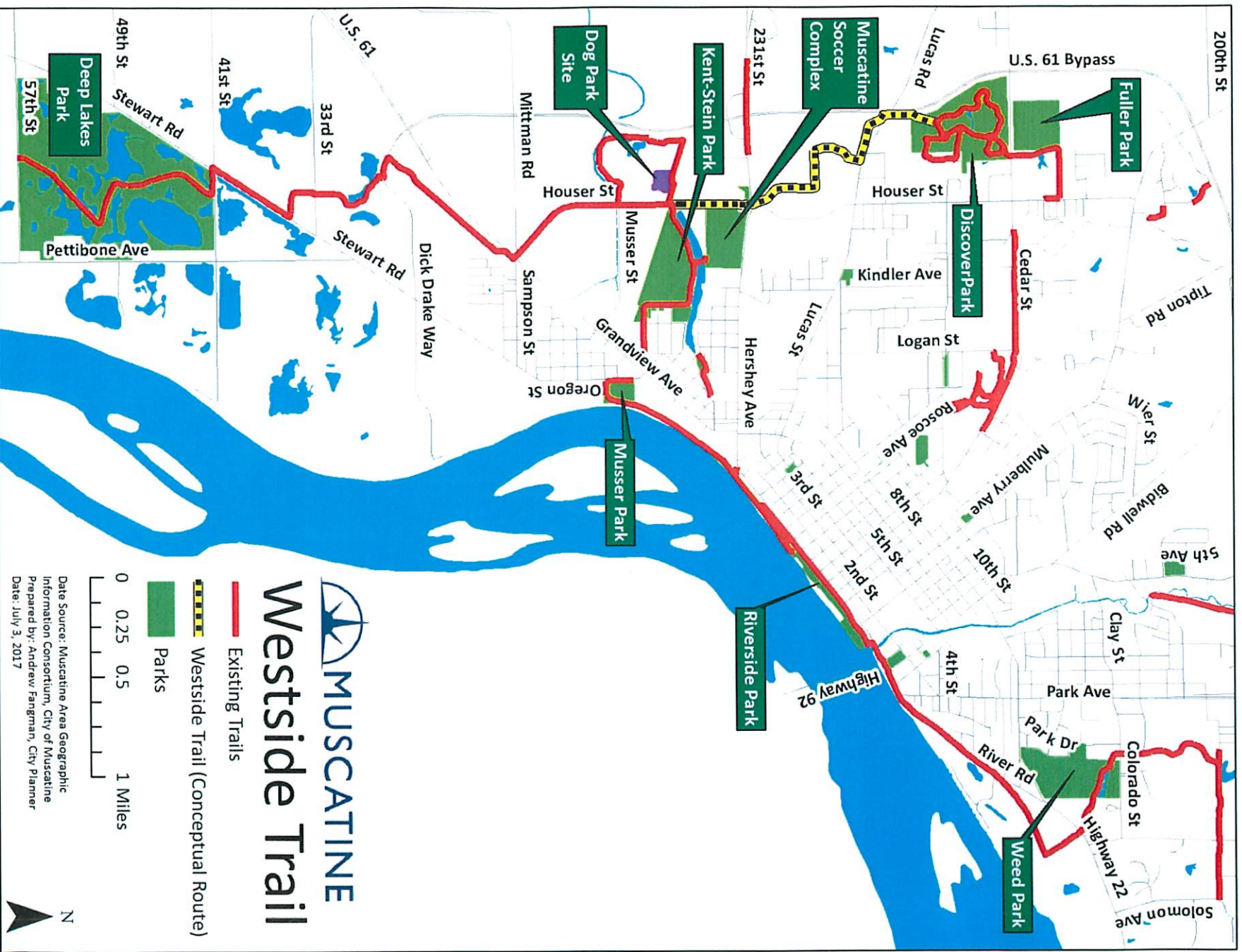




# MUSCATINE Community Dog Park

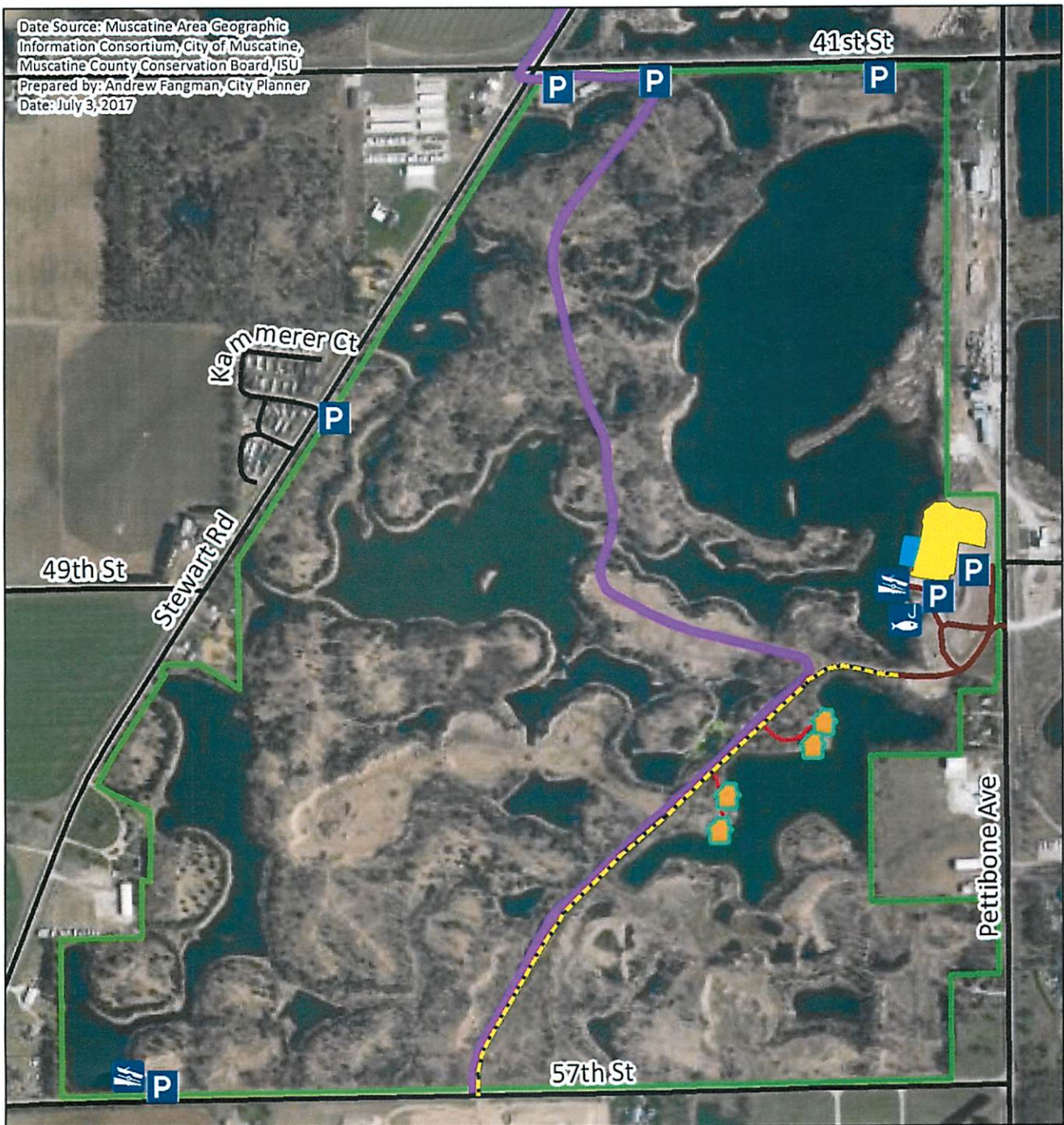








Date Source: Muscatine Area Geographic Information Consortium, City of Muscatine, Muscatine County Conservation Board, ISU  
 Prepared by: Andrew Fangman, City Planner  
 Date: July 3, 2017



# Deep Lakes Park





**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION WITH THE IOWA  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR COMMUNITY  
ATTRACTION & TOURISM  
PROGRAM FUNDING FOR THE PEARL OF THE PEARLS OF PROGRESS  
PROJECT**

**WHEREAS**, the State of Iowa, through the Iowa Economic Development Authority, has funded the Community Attraction & Tourism Program to assist communities in the development and creation of multiple purpose attraction and tourism facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, The Pearls of Progress Project in Muscatine, Iowa, requires Community Attractions & Tourism funds in order to complete the construction of public recreational, cultural and entertainment attractions described in its grant application; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Muscatine supports Pearls of Progress Project and views the project as having a positive cultural and economic impact on the community; and

**WHEREAS**, an application has been prepared requesting Community Attraction & Tourism Program funding in the amount of \$1,000,000; and

**WHEREAS**, such application should be approved as to form and content; and;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the application with the Iowa Department of Economic Development for Community Attraction & Tourism Program funding for the pearls of progress project is hereby approved as to form and content.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Mayor is hereby authorized to execute and file the application on behalf of the City of Muscatine, with the Iowa Economic Development Authority for Community Attraction & Tourism Program funding for the Pearls of Progress Project.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City of Muscatine, Iowa does hereby commit to address funding for Pearls of Progress Project as outlined in the application at the appropriate time in the City's budgeting process.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 6<sup>th</sup> day of July 2017.**

**BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF MUSCATINE, IOWA**

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**Diana L. Broderson, Mayor**

**Attest:**

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**Gregg Mandsager, City Clerk**